The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor according to the historic, legislative and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
2 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1646 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1942 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 32, NO. 43

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Things have been happening so fast in Washington that we were almost out of breath trying to keep in step until we discovered that we were right back where we started from and might do better to pause, look and listen.

Too many people in Washington are running around in circles, producing a great deal of energy and oratory in an effort to look busy and efficient.

Take the manpower question, for instance. The two men in charge for the Government are Manpower Commissioner Paul V. McNutt and Gen. Lewis Hershey, the Selective Service Director. One day McNutt appears in the headlines shouting "there must be a law" and the next day Hershey is saying the next day Gen. Hershey hits the front pages with an equally positive declaration against compulsory job service.

Is there nothing central to the sober, sensible and constructive program outlined by AFL President Green. He says that labor will support job freezing if that proves necessary to win the war. That time, he emphasizes is not yet here, and we should not anticipate it because job freezing is a serious surrender of individual freedom to be undertaken only as a last resort.

Labor Shows the Way

Before we go to such lengths, Mr. Green suggests, let's make a complete survey of what we have in the way of manpower and womanpower. Let's try to use the available labor supply more intelligently and more effectively.

Then, if that doesn't work, we must take necessary and important steps before job freezing. An occupational deferment commission should be appointed to keep skilled workers out of military service and to establish an adequate supply of agricultural labor. Standards which management, as well as labor, must observe should be established. Definite social security, accident prevention and unemployment compensation measures should be provided. Adequate housing, schooling and health care must be established for workers and their families who are removed to remote sections.

Finally, no employer, Mr. Green insists, should be permitted to profit from the labor of workers who are drafted to work for him.

These strikes us as a sound and sensible program. It would be a swell idea if official Washington got busy right away putting it into effect instead of seeking headline notoriety. The more these officials sound off in print, the stronger the impression grows that most of them actually don't know what they're talking about and are just running around in circles.

It is just another proof that labor is supplying the leadership and the vision in this war effort and that it would be far better if our government took greater advantage of the recommendations of those who know what it's all about.

Land At Sea

But some of our public officials still list organized labor as number one on their periods of past history. Take Admiral Land, for instance. A few months ago we were convinced that the retired Rear Admiral had seen the light. He appeared on the "Labor For Victory" program and said the most complimentary things about labor's contribution to the war effort in the shipyards. But the other night the Admiral faced a different audience—the Investment Bankers Association—and he confessed that he'd like to see organized labor emasculated.

This was immediately interpreted in the press as a union-baiting speech. The Admiral, when he saw the news stories, had another change of heart. He insisted he didn't say union organizers or labor organizers, just "organizers." The retraction would have been more effective if the Admiral had said on his own initiative that he hoped the investment bankers would do a good job to help win the war—as they most certainly are.

However, the Admiral got so panicky that he shut up like a clam. It would be a good thing for dozens of other administrative officials did likewise for the duration. No better form of censorship could be enforced by the Government than to ban public speeches by its officials until the war is over.

We can't get too excited about the Admiral because he is now suffering the tortures of the suppressed. But we'd hate to see the animosity aroused by his night brick laid against labor. Admiral Land, as War Shipping Administrator and head of the Maritime Commission, is no part of the Navy. And we're beginning to believe that the Navy is learning the advantages of playing ball with labor. Important developments are on the way. Let's give the Navy a chance to get right.

Navy Offers To Play Ball With Labor In New Drive For War Production

Washington, D. C. — The United States Navy launched a new offensive last week—an offensive which may do more to win the war than any dreadnaught afloat. Its goal was cooperation with labor to achieve greater war production.

More than 200 labor representatives from the navy yards and shore establishments of the Navy were called into conference in the nation's capital with the administrative heads and local commanders of the Navy Department. They shook hands, compared notes, discussed common problems and came away with a far better understanding of each other and a firmer respect for each other than ever before.

At the conclusion of the conference, Navy officials were so impressed by its constructive results that they immediately began making plans for future meetings of the same sort from time to time.

From Secretary Frank Knox down, the Navy leaders impressed upon the conference the need for speed in the warship construction program and increases in munitions production. At the same time, they praised the workers in the navy yards and shore establishments for their splendid record to date.

Stanley Oliver, secretary of the AFL Bremerton Metal Trades Council, voiced the sentiments of the labor representatives when he said:

"The delegation from the Puget Sound Navy Yard came to this conference to deliver a message and also as to receive one. We want the department to know that we are ready to do any job assigned to us. We want more work. We will let nothing stand in the way to prevent our contributing the utmost to this war effort."

A Navy higher-up commented:

"His talk convinced me the workers didn't need this conference. But our officers and civilian chiefs learned a lot."

At a dinner climaxing the conference, the Navy trotted out its top officials and some of its war heroes to address the labor boys. Secretary Knox took occasion to chide the labor press, "the unsung workhorses of American journalism," for making the Navy "the goat" for its criticism. He explained that "this historic meeting" was not a "complete union clambake" but the "beginning of the implementation" of the new Navy labor policy enunciated recently by Assistant Secretary of the Navy Ralph Bard. He summarized this policy as follows:

"It means closer cooperation, more understanding of each other's problems, more friendliness in our relationships and undoubtedly greater sacrifice on the part of all of us. This is a sincere attempt to bring together in a workmanlike way all men and women of the Navy family for the sole purpose of winning this war and achieving victory for our country and our common cause."

President John P. Frey of the AFL Metal Trades Department, in a brief talk, emphasized the importance of "Navy brass hats and labor leaders using the same language" and praised the accomplishments of labor in building and launching ships far ahead of schedule.

In a message relayed by Secretary Knox, President Roosevelt urged the conferees "to take home from this visit to Washington a sober recognition of the immense task of winning the war that still lies before us, and a fixed determination that nothing will be allowed to hamper, delay or interfere with its accomplishment."

CENSORSHIP OFFICE BANS DATA ON WAR PRISONERS

Washington, D. C.—The Office of Censorship requests that nothing be published or broadcast about the arrival, movements, or confinement of prisoners of war brought to this country, except on the authority of the Provost Marshal General, who is responsible for their security and treatment.

Provisions of international law surround treatment of war prisoners in most of the nations at war. These provisions are for their protection, maintenance and punishment. It is hardly necessary to point out that this international law is as important to American prisoners in other countries as to war prisoners in this country.

ANDREW FURUSETH CLUB DEDICATED TO SEAMEN

New York City.—The Andrew Furuseth Club for the exclusive use of American seamen was dedicated at 30 East 27th Street in a ceremony which included many prominent persons who joined with sailors dressed in sweat-shirts and dungarees to pay tribute not only to the men who go to sea today but also to those who have fallen in line of duty, and above all to the father of organized maritime labor, Andrew Furuseth.

The club, sponsored by the United Seamen's Service, is fully equipped with everything to make life comfortable—television, radio room, and lounge, library and writing room, and other services, including medical care and recreation. Speaking from London, Mayor La Guardia, who paid a tribute to Furuseth for having "won almost single-handed reforms for the seamen long overdue," and Harry Collins, representing the Seafarers International Union, who said he was "glad to see that at last the merchant seamen are coming into their own."

CIO RAID ON RAILWAY DEFEATED BY AFL UNION

Another CIO attempt to "raid" the railroad field was beaten off in a National Mediation Board election among dining car employes on the Alton.

The AFL Hotel and Restaurant Employes' Union, which had heretofore represented the employes, was defeated the CIO Utility Workers' Union by a vote of 71 to 42 and was certified by the board as bargaining agency.

MATHIS NAMED OFFICIAL OF APPRENTICE TRAINING

Washington, D. C.—The appointment of Broncel R. Mathis, Portland, Ore., as Supervisor of Apprenticeship Training for the AFL was confirmed by William F. Patterson, Chief of the Apprentice Training Service, War Manpower Commission.

Mr. Mathis is a former AFL organizer. His headquarters will be located in San Francisco, where he has been acting supervisor of Region XII since July, when the Apprentice Training field offices were reorganized to bring all activities in the Pacific region under his supervision including California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada and Arizona.

F. J. PRATT NAMED CHIEF OF TECHNICAL ENGINEERS

Washington, D. C.—The Executive Council of the AFL Federation of Technical Engineers, Architects and Draftsmen's Unions, AFL Building Trades Department, announced Foster J. Pratt of Seattle, Wash., as the successor to O. L. Rosemund, who resigned as president of the Federation. Mr. Pratt has been a vice president of the IPTEADU for ten years and has held the office of president of the Northwest District Council since its inception.

AFL UNION WINS POLL AT SHOE COMPANY PLANT

Lynchburg, Va. — The Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, AFL, decisively rolled up a big majority in the election at the Craddock and Terry Shoe Company to choose a collective bargaining representative. The vote was 1122 for the AFL, 639 for the CIO.

News Briefs

BOILERMAKERS UNION REPORTS LARGE GAINS

Kansas City, Kans.—The International Brotherhood of Boilermakers revealed that new collective bargaining agreements are still increasing at a record rate. Ten firms recently signed up with the brotherhood. There are now more employers under agreement and more members on the rolls than at any other time in the brotherhood's history.

LIBELS ON LABOR UNIONS CONDEMNED BY CHURCHMEN

Harrisburg, Pa. — Church backing for laws to improve the lot of men who toil was urged by the department of social service of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches.

The department pointed out that the church and labor "have much in common" and denounced critics who "stigmatize the entire labor movement" by citing isolated abuses.

"The church is largely made up of working people," the report declared. "But often professional and business members seem to hold official position and determine policy more largely than the laboring constituency. The church could render a real service by having its members give strong support to legislation providing better conditions for workers."

STRIKE FIGURES REFUTE HALLUCINATION OF NAM

Newark, N. J.—An item not released by the National Association of Manufacturers in its strike hysteria campaign were the strike figures in New Jersey, issued Oct. 14 by the State Mediation Board.

In that great industrial state, only 78 strikes occurred since Jan. 1, the board reported.

Green Opposes Job Freezing Law Now; Offers 7-Point Manpower Program

AFL Chief Outlines "Must" Steps Before Job Drafting Is Undertaken "As Last Resort"

Washington, D. C.—Calling job freezing "premature" at this time, AFL President William Green submitted to the nation a constructive seven-point program of action which must be taken before drafting of industrial manpower and womanpower is put into effect.

Mr. Green's statement, issued a few days after he had consulted on this problem with President Roosevelt at a White House conference, called for:

1—Full utilization of available manpower and womanpower on the present voluntary and democratic basis first.

2—A prompt and complete registration of all those fit for work in war and civilian industries.

3—The supply of labor shown by this survey should be exhausted before job freezing legislation is enacted.

4—Definite provisions for occupational deferment from military service should be adopted.

5—Social security, accident insurance and unemployment compensation should be provided.

6—No employer should be permitted to reap profits from the labor of men drafted for work in his plant.

7—Adequate housing facilities should be set up for those transported to work in remote sections and the cost of transportation should not be borne by the workers.

Mr. Green said the AFL will accede to job freezing and drafting of labor only as a last resort, when it becomes convinced that such action is imperative to win the war.

He warned that job freezing is "a serious step," a departure from "the democratic process" which "strips away all freedom of action and is compulsory in character." That is why he called now for the preliminary steps outlined above, none of which "have thus far been taken."

"The American Federation of Labor is opposed," he said, "to the enactment of compulsory job freezing legislation which is now being considered by Congress. We regard job freezing legislation at present as premature. We will vigorously oppose enactment of such legislation at this time.

"Until the voluntary system of employment and service which is a part of our cherished democratic process and the available manpower and womanpower which is ours to command have been utilized and drafted, no labor statement are set up, either by legislation or by executive order, the American Federation of Labor must oppose the enactment of job freezing legislation."

Because job freezing and compulsory work service are justifiable only when necessary to win the war, Mr. Green insisted that if such steps are taken workers affected must be protected against exploitation by private industry and private management. He said:

"No employer of labor should be permitted to reap profits from or exploit a worker who is frozen to his job. If the worker is frozen to his job, he should have the right to improve his standard of life and living by seeking work at higher wages when opportunity presents itself, management and the owners of industry should forego the right to profit from the earnings of such worker."

AFL Calls For Full Aid To United Nations Relief

(Note to Editors: The AFL Convention at Toronto directed that the widest possible publicity be given by the labor press to its declaration on "United Nations Relief." In accordance with the convention's decision, we are publishing the text of this inspiring statement herewith:)

As we review the world of today and reflect upon our present civilization we are confounded with the darkness which has descended upon it and which has shadowed a peaceful humankind. We are more than confounded when we would seek consistency, logic and reason in the constructive efforts of man for thousands of years to establish a better and finer world with the present mad struggle to maim, to kill, to destroy all that has been builded up through these years of an advancing civilization.

Today we find, ruined cities, ashes; earth scorched for thousands of miles in advance of invading enemies; human corpses strewn along the highways and byways of what only two or three years ago were proud, civilized lands; starving millions in occupied lands, concentration camps and completely at the mercy of brutal Gestapo hangmen.

Rare are crowded to inhuman limits with thousands of forcibly ejected city and village folk from the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Norway, Czechoslovakia, Luxembourg, and other Nazi-conquered lands, being shuttled across Europe towards the devastated countries in the East, condemned to toil for their new German overlords, to toil as slaves under the whip of barbarous overseers.

Daily shootings of hostages; the literal destruction of cities, villages and towns where sparks of rebellion against the inhumane bondage imposed by the modern Huns flare up occasionally, heartless terror without regard to guilt or innocence accompanied by confiscation of all food and property, removal of children to an alien Nazi youth camps in order to estrange them from their young minds and hearts all memory of their former nationality; drafting of hundreds of thousands of men and women into slavery in Germany, and the mass abduction of young women for the brothels of Hitler's armies.

Such in part, is the pitiless inferno which the Nazi Poschrer has let loose upon the unfortunate populations of all Europe, such is the nightmare world which grows in fury and desperation as the bloody Nazi conquest is beginning to encounter sturdier opposition both on the battlefields of the Old World and from the steadily growing underground, revolt in the occupied and enslaved countries.

It is to the undying credit of our labor movement in America that we have discerned the evil genius of Nazi-Fascism long before it assumed its current satanic dimensions. The American Federation of Labor, nine years ago, had warned the world against the Nazi plague, had instituted in 1933 an anti-Nazi boycott and had pronounced an anathema upon its philosophy of intolerance and brute force. Hitler inaugurated his murderous crusade against democracy and the principles of humanity in February, 1933, by first smashing its labor unions. And in every land the Nazis invaded and conquered they took pains first to annihilate the labor movement, killing off its leaders or forcing them to flee their native lands, and eliminating all trade union property.

The labor movement of America has not remained indifferent to the cries of help from our afflicted fellow men in the world. Long before the war years substantial sums were raised for war sufferers in the devastated European lands, distributed by responsible American and British labor agencies to the hundreds of thousands needy and near afflicted. Considerable gains have been advanced through reliable labor channels for underground anti-Nazi activities in places where open resistance would be ignited and fostered to the greatest discomfort of the common enemy.

Even some important has been the spiritual value of this aid, the constant shedding of our national illusions about the nature of the Nazi abominations and their blighting effect upon the civilization of which we, on the American continent, are an inseparable part. The revelations of Nazi cruelties and of the relentless blitzkrieg of the democracies against them has served to open the eyes of millions of Americans to the inevitability of the coming struggle and to the preparations for that fateful conflict.

Today that picture has changed fundamentally. We are in the very midst of this global Armageddon. Today, we are in the front lines of the greatest struggle for survival in the history of mankind, side with all the democratic and liberty-loving peoples of the world. Today, this herculean conflict involves not merely generous giving of material and moral aid to our disinherited brothers and comrades in Europe. The problem of relief to the American continent, are an inseparable part. The revelations of Nazi cruelties and of the relentless blitzkrieg of the democracies against them has served to open the eyes of millions of Americans to the inevitability of the coming struggle and to the preparations for that fateful conflict.

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Today we are building for war and for victory. Tomorrow, after the war a greater, stronger and more enlightened labor movement representing the entire gainfully employed population of our country, matured and tested in the struggle against global conflict will be called upon to safeguard the peace. The common struggle for common aims and in alliance with other nations, in other lands and upon other continents, will have taught us the greatest lesson of human solidarity and understanding in all our history. It will teach us the invaluable lesson of true human quality and equality, as demonstrated on the fields of battle by the Chinese, the British, the Russians, the Poles, the Yugoslavs and those of all other nations large and small.

It is fitting for the labor movement, which has pioneered in countless efforts of relief and endeavor, to be in the very forefront of preparedness for post-war period. This post-war new world, half-weary and half-ruined, will call upon America for help in reconstruction. America's contribution to this rehabilitation was and should be of as great historic significance as her part in attaining victory over the forces of darkness and barbarity which today are still engulfing the world.

Labor Hails Wage-Hour Act

Washington, D. C.—Jointly presented by the AFL and the CIO, Labor For Victory on Oct. 25 celebrated the fourth anniversary of the Wage-Hour Act.—

President William Green declared on the broadcast that there is now universal and "open recognition that this law has badly needed, that it has accomplished a great deal of good and that it is here to stay."

Admiral Emory S. Land, Maritime Administrator, Monrad C. Metcalfe, Wage-Hour Administrator, and Miss Mary Anderson, Director of the Women's Bureau, Department of Labor, also spoke.

Admiral Land declared that the Wage-Hour Act has been a powerful factor in the war effort. Metcalfe explained that the law has been responsible for the increase in the minimum wage from 25 cents an hour to 40 cents an hour, and that it has been responsible for the reduction of the work week from 44 hours to 40 hours.

Miss Anderson declared that the Wage-Hour Act has been responsible for the increase in the number of women in industry, and that it has been responsible for the increase in the wages of women workers.

NWLB Issues Rulings To Prevent Pirating of Workers By High Wages

Washington, D. C.—The National War Labor Board unanimously approved new wage regulations designed to prevent the "pirating" of workers by the payment of higher wages for the same type of job.

In another step toward the evolution of a wage policy to accord with the President's economic stabilization program, the NWLB made these rulings:

"The hiring of an individual at a wage rate in excess of the rate presently established in the plant for employes of similar skill and productive ability will be considered a case in which the individual is employed in a 'wage increase' within the meaning of Executive Order No. 9250 (and) must, therefore, have the approval of the board before it becomes effective).

"If a wage rate for a job classification has not theretofore been established by the employer for the plant in which such job is to be, the level not exceeding that which prevails in similar classifications within the area, unless a higher rate is approved by the National War Labor Board."

It was explained that both clauses were part of "a move to stop the pirating of workers with promises of exorbitant wages" and that the latter provision was designed, especially, to prevent wholesale raiding of existing war plants when a new plant or aircraft factory, for example, was ready to go into production and needed a new labor force.

Another board order suspends, at least temporarily, those collective bargaining contracts now in effect which provide for automatic pay increases if the cost of living rises or advances by a certain amount. Under the new interpretation of a previous general order, such contracts will not be affected by the board before they can become effective.

A previous order exempting from Federal control wage adjustments where employers of not more than eight persons was interpreted so that the exemption will apply to employers who own or operate more than one plant or unit when the aggregate of employes in such plants or units exceeds eight.

Officials said, for example, that chain stores which might employ fewer than eight persons in each unit would now come under NWLB jurisdiction because their aggregate employment would be much greater.

AFL Launches Fight On Ramspeck Bill To Relax 40-Hour Overtime Standard

Washington, D. C.—Opposition to amendments to the Wage-Hour Act which would permit circumvention of the 40-hour week standard for overtime was expressed by AFL President William Green in a letter to Rep. Robert Ramspeck, sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. Green 'pointed out that relaxation of overtime standards by the voluntary basis proposed in the Ramspeck Bill, would not expedite the war effort or increase production but would result only in confusion.

"The probabilities are," Mr. Green wrote, "that employers, in order to get that some workers, acting under pressure, would agree to forego their legal right to payment for overtime worked while others would refuse to do so. That might mean that some workers in an industry would be working an overtime while a part of their number receiving overtime pay while others working in the same industry would be enjoying all the benefits of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Both an unfair competitive condition and a highly unsatisfactory state of affairs would be created."

Mr. Green warned the Congressman that the proposed change in the Fair Labor Standards Act to all sorts of dangerous amendments. He said it would result in a heavy pay cut for war workers who cannot now expect increases in their regular pay because of the stabilization program.